

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-10 SPC-03

SS-20 RSC-01 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 MC-02

EB-11 OMB-01 TRSE-00 PRS-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /097 W

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O R 141720Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9605

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 0227

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MASS, BEXP, BE

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR F-104

REF: BRUSSELS 0159; BRUSSELS 0062

1. I MADE MUCH THE SAME PRESENTATION TODAY TO SENIOR
VICE PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS ON REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR
THE F-104'S AS I HAD PREVIOUSLY TO THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. I PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED THE BREAK
IN THE TRADITION OF CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE U. S. AND
BELGIAN AIR FORCES WHICH THE PURCHASE OF NON-AMERICAN
AIRCRAFT WOULD NECESSARILY EFFECT. I SUGGESTED AGAIN
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THAT WE ARE VERLY WILLING TO BE HELPFUL IN PUTTING AT THE

BELGIAN GOVERNMENT'S DISPOSAL OUR ADVANCE TECHNIQUES
FOR MAKING COMPARATIVE TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS FOR AIRCRAFT.

2. TINDEMANS, WHOM I REGARD AS THE BEST FRIEND
OF THE UNITED STATES AMONG THE IMPORTANT MINISTERS, TOLD
ME THAT "IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR (DEFENSE MINISTER)
VANDEN BOEYNANTS TO REVERSE HIS POSITION". IN RESPONSE
TO MY QUESTION, HE SIDE THAT THE REPLACEMENT QUESTION
HAS BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE CABINET BUT THAT NO DECISION
HAS YET BEEN TAKEN. HE FULLY AGREED WITH THE IMPORTANCE
OF THE FACTORS I HAD MENTIONED, BUT STATED THAT THERE ARE
IMPORTANT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT MUST BE TAKEN
INTO ACCOUNT. I WENT SO FAR AS TO ASK WHETHER BELGIUM
REALLY WANTS MIRAGES AND WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT IS QUITE
SURE THAT THEY WOULD BE IDENTICAL TO THE AIRCRAFT IN
THE FRENCH AIR FORCE.

3. COMMENT: IN THE LIGHT OF TINDEMANS' FRANK COMMENTS
TO ME, I BELIEVE IT URGENT THAT MY COLLEAGUES IN THE HAGUE,
OSLO, USNATO AND I RECEIVE GUIDANCE ON THE POINTS I HAVE
RAISED PREVIOUSLY (BRUSSELS 0062). I WOULD LIKE TO
GO BACK TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOB ON INSTRUCTIONS
I FURTHER SUGGEST THAT THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE COMMUNICATE
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH VANDEN BOEYNANTS AND HIS CONTERPARTS
IN OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO FORESTALL A PREMATURE DECISION.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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